



Queens College of Arts and Science
for Women Punalkulam , Near
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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Subject : Fiction

Topic : TO THE LIGHTHOUSE (UNIT IV)

Sub Code :16ACCEN4

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TO THE LIGHTHOUSE VIRGINIA WOOLF

CHARACTERS

Mr. Ramsay- A tragic and self-pitying philosopher
Mrs. Ramsay-she is warm, beautiful

Lily Briscoe-A middle aged woman

William Bankes-A boyhood friend of Ramsay

Augustus Carmichael- After marrying a girl, he goes to India where he translated some poetry.

Charles Tansley-He is an atheist and is mocked by everyone.
Andrew-A son of the Ramsay

Cam-she is the youngest daughter.
Jasper- A servant of the Ramsay

Paul Rayley-He is known for searching lost things
Pure- It is Ramsay who has given her this name
Mildred-The cook in the Ramsay household

Mrs. Macalab –An old maid servant in the summer house
Minta Doyle-she marries Paul Rayley

Macalister-An old sailor

OUTLINE STORY

To the Lighthouse is a 1927 novel by Virginia Woolf. The novel centers on the Ramsay family and their visits to the Isle of Skye in Scotland between 1910 and 1920.

The book is divided into three sections:

Part I: The Window

Part II: Time Passes

Part III: The Lighthouse

- In this first section, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay's relationship is highlighted, as well as their distinct personalities, i.e., Mr. Ramsay's idiosyncracies and Mrs. Ramsay's struggle to create harmony.
- Other characters are seen largely in their relationship to the Ramsays.
- We are watching the figures in this drama as if through a window.
- We get "inside their heads" as we hear their thoughts just as they occur to them.
- The day passes. Mr. Ramsay takes his walks and ponders how he can push beyond "Q". Mrs. Ramsay flutters about her guests, meeting their needs.
- She reads a story to her son. The children romp and act mischievously.
- Romance is in the air as Mrs. Ramsay encourages Minta Doyle and Paul Rayley and Lily Briscoe and William Bankes.
- Dinner becomes an occasion; the *Bœuf en Daube* is prepared perfectly and spirits are high, rounded out with poetry, "And all the lives we ever lived and all the lives to be are full of trees and changing leaves."

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

- The children are put to bed. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay sit, reading, here-discovering Sir Walter Scott she finding the “odds and ends of the day stuck to this magnet” a sonnet.
- The strength of their feelings for each other, bruised and scattered by the day, returns. There is a sense of contentment.
- In this section, an omniscient narrator dramatizes the house over a period of years.
- We learn that Mrs. Ramsay has passed away, Andrew has been killed in the war, and Prue has died in childbirth.
- The abandoned house is ghost-like: Nature predominates in this section.
- The house is now peopled by the dark, the rain, and the wind. Mrs. McNab, the housekeeper, is the only character who we experience in this section.
- She is the weathervane. She reminisces about Mrs. Ramsay and the mood of the house in former days.
- The Lighthouse, the final section, takes place ten years after the beginning of the book
- In this section, Lily Briscoe, is the central presence. It is through her struggle to create meaning of all this, the house, the family, her confused perceptions, that the novel comes to closure
- Lily has her vision and completes her picture at the end. Mr. Ramsay is still brusque and demanding, but he finally manages to accompany James and Cam to the Lighthouse, even complimenting James on his sailing.
- James feels satisfied that he has reached the lighthouse. It conformed some obscure feeling of his about his own character. The journey, representing perhaps life's journey, has been long and fraught with difficulties, yet ultimately satisfying.

